

¶ Yis, pardee, quod Deiphebus, wel thow most,
In al that ever I may, and God tofore,
At nere it but for man I love most,
My brother Troilus; but sey wherfore
It is; for sith that day that I was bore,
I nas, ne nevermo to been I thinke,
Ayeins a thing that mighte thee forthinke.

¶ Pandare gan him thonke, and to him seyde:
Lo, sire, I have a lady in this toun,
That is my nece, and called is Criseyde,
Which som men wolden doon oppressioun,
And wrongfully have hir possessioun:
Wherfor I of your lordship yow biseche
To been our freend, withoute more speche.

¶ Deiphebus him answerde: O, is not this,
That thow spekest of to me thus straungely,
Criseyde, my freend? ¶ He seyde: Yis.
¶ Than nedeth, quod Deiphebus hardely,
Namore to speke, for trusteth wel, that I
Wol be hir champion with spore and yerde;
I roughte nought though alle hir foos it herde.

But tel me, thou that woost al this matere,
How I might best avayle? now lat see.
¶ Quod Pandarus: If ye, my lord so dere,
Wolden as now don this honour to me,
To prayen hir tomorwe, lo, that she
Com unto yow hir pleyntes to devyse,
Hir adversaries wolde of hit agryse.

And if I more dorste preye as now,
And chargin yow to have so greet travayle,
To han som of your bretheren here with yow,
That mighten to hir cause bet avayle,
Than, woot I wel, she mighte never fayle
for to be holpen, what at your instaunce,
What with hir othere freendes governaunce.

¶ Deiphebus, which that comen was, of kinde,
To al honour and bountee to consente,
Answerde: It shal be doon; and I can finde
Yet gretter help to this in myn entente.
What wolt thou seyn, if I for Eleyne sente
To speke of this? I trowe it be the beste;
for she may leden Paris as hir leste.

Of Ector, which that is my lord, my brother,
It nedeth nought to preye him freend to be;
for I have herd him, o tyme and eek other,
Speke of Criseyde swich honour, that he
May seyn no bet, swich hap to him hath she.
It nedeth nought his helpes for to crave;
He shal be swich, right as we wole him have.

Spek thou thyself also to Troilus
On my bihalve, and pray him with us dyne.
¶ Sire, al this shal be doon, quod Pandarus;
And took his leve, and never gan to fyne,
But to his neces hous, as streght as lyne,
He com; and fond hir fro the mete aryse;
And sette him down, and spak right in this wyse.

He seyde: O veray God, so have I ronnel
Lo, nece myn, see ye nought how I swete?
I noot whether ye the more thank me comne.
Be ye nought war how that fals Poliphete
Is now aboute eftsones for to plete,
And bringe on yow advocacyes newe?
¶ I? no, quod she, and chaunged al hir bewe.

What is he more aboute, me to drecche
And doon me wrong? what shal I do, alas?
Yet of himself nothing ne wolde I recche,
Nere it for Antenor and Eneas,
That been his freendes in swich maner cas;
But, for the love of God, myn uncle dere,
No fors of that, lat him have al yfere;

Withouten that, I have ynough for us.
¶ Nay, quod Pandare, it shal nothing be so.
for I have been right now at Deiphebus,
And Ector, and myne othere lordes mo,
And shortly maked eche of hem his fo;
That, by my thrift, he shal it never winne
for ought he can, whan that so he biginne.

¶ And as they casten what was best to do,
Deiphebus, of his owene curtasye,
Com hir to preye, in his propre persone,
To holde him on the morwe companye
At diner, which she nolde not denye,
But goodly gan to his preyere obeye.
He thonked hir, and wente upon his weye.

Whanne this was doon, this Pandare up anon,
To telle in short, and forth gan for to wende
To Troilus, as stille as any soon,
And al this thing he tolde him, word and ende;
And how that he Deiphebus gan to blende;
And seyde him: Now is tyme, if that thou come,
To bere thee wel tomorwe, and al is wonne.

Now spek, now prey, now pitously compleyne;
Lat not for nyce shame, or drede, or slouthe;
Somtyme a man mot telle his owene peyne;
Bileve it, and she shal han on thee routhe;
Thou shalt be saved by thy feyth, in trouthe.
But wel wot I, thou art now in a drede;
And what it is, I leye, I can arede.

Thow thinkest now: How sholde I doon al this?
for by my cheres mosten folk aspye,
That for hir love is that I fare amis;
Yet hadde I lever unwist for sorwe dye.
Now think not so, for thou dost greet folye,
for right now have I founden o manere
Of sleighte, for to coveren al thy chere.

Thow shalt gon over night, and that as blyve,
Unto Deiphebus hous, as thee to pleye,
Thy maladye away the bet to dryve,
for why thou semest syk, soth for to seye.
Some after that, down in thy bed thee leye,
And sey, thow mayst no lenger up endure,
And lye right there, and byde thyn aventure.

Sey that thy fever is wont thee for to take
The same tyme, and lasten til amowre;
And lat see now how wel thou canst it make,
for, pardee, syk is he that is in sorwe.
Go now, farewell! and, Venus here to borwe,
I hope, and thou shal fully ther conferme,
Thy grace she shal fully ther conferme.

¶ Quod Troilus: Ywis, thou nedeless
Counseylest me, that sykliche I me feyne!
for I am syk in earnest, douteless,
So that wel neigh I sterfe for the peyne.
¶ Quod Pandarus: Thou shalt the bettre pleyne,
And hast the lasse nede to countrefete;
for him men demen boot that men seen swete.

Lo, holde thee at thy triste cloos, and I
Shal wel the deer unto thy bowe dryve,
Therwith he took his leve al softlye,
And Troilus to paleys wente blyve.
So glad ne was he never in al his lyve;
And to Pandarus reed gan al assente,
And to Deiphebus hous at night he wente.

What nedeth yow to tellen al the chere
That Deiphebus unto his brother made,
Or his accesse, or his syklych manere,
How men gan him with clothes for to lade,
Whan he was leyde, and how men wolde him glade?
But al for nought, he held forth ay the wyse
That ye han herd Pandare er this devyse.

But certeyn is, er Troilus him leyde,
Deiphebus had him prayed, over night,
To been a freend and helping to Criseyde.
God woot, that he it grauntede anon-right,
To been hir fulle freend with al his might.
But swich a nede was to preye him thenne,
As for to bidde a wood man for to renne.

The morwen com, and neighen gan the tyme
Of meel tyd, that the faire quene Eleyne
Shoop hir to been, an houre after the pryne,
With Deiphebus, to whom she nolde feyne;
But as his suster, boonly, sooth to seyne,
She com to diner in hir playn entente.
But God and Pandare wiste al what this mente.

Come eek Criseyde, al innocent of this,
Antigone, hir sister Tarbe also;
But flee we now prolixitee best is,
for love of God, and lat us faste go
Right to the effect, withoute tales mo,
Why al this folk assembled in this place;
And lat us of hir saluings pace.

Gret honour dide hem Deiphebus, certeyn,
And fedde hem wel with al that mighte lyke.
But evermore: Atlas! was his refreyn,
My goode brother Troilus, the syke,
Lyth yet. And therwithal he gan to syke;
And after that, he peyned him to glade
hem as he mighte, and chere good he made.

Compleyned eek Eleyne of his syknesse
So feithfully, that pitee was to here,
And every wight gan waxen for accesse
A leche anon, and seyde: In this manere
Men curen folk; this charme I wol yow lere.
¶ But there sat oon, al list hir nought to teche,
That thoughte, best coude I yet been his leche.

After compleynt, him gonnen they to preyse,
As folk don yet, whan som wight hath bigonne
To preyse a man, and up with prys him reyse
A thousand fold yet hyer than the sonne:
He is, he can, that fewe lordes conne.
¶ And Pandarus, of that they wolde afferme,
He not forgat hir preysing to conferme.

Herde al this thing Criseyde wel ynough,
And every word gan for to notifiye;
for which with sobre chere hir herte lough;
for who is that ne wolde hir glorifye,
To mowen swich a knight don live or dye?
But al passe I, lest ye to longe dwelle;
for for o fyn is al that ever I telle.

The tyme com, fro diner for to ryse,
And, as hem oughte, arisen everychoon,
And gonne a while of this and that devyse.
But Pandarus brak al this speche anon,
And seyde to Deiphebus: Wole ye goon,
If youré will be, as I yow preyde,
To speke here of the nedes of Criseyde?

¶ Eleyne, which that by the hond hir held,
Took first the tale, and seyde: Go we blyve;
And goodly on Criseyde she biheld,
And seyde: Joves lat him never thryve,
That dooth yow harm, & bringe him sone of lyve
And yewe me sorwe, but he shal it rewe,
If that I may, and alle folk be trewe.

¶ Tel thou thy neces cas, quod Deiphebus
To Pandarus, for thou canst best it telle.
¶ My lordes and my ladyes, it stant thus;
What sholde I lenger, quod he, do yow dwelle?
¶ He rong hem out a proces lyk a belle,
Upon hir fo, that highte Poliphete,
So heynous, that men mighte on it spete.

Answerde of this ech worse of hem than other,
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to varien:
An/honged be swich oon, were he my brother;
And so he shal, for it ne may not varien.
¶ What sholde I lenger in this tale tarien?
Pleyntly, at ones, alle they hir highten,
To been hir helpe in al that ever they mighten.

Spak than Eleyne, and seyde: Pandarus,
Woot ought my lord, my brother, this matere,
I mene, Ector? or woot it Troilus?
¶ He seyde: Ye, but wole ye now me here?
Me thinketh this, sith Troilus is here,
It were good, if that ye wolde assente,
She tolde herself him al this, er she wente.